

Allport (W.W.): Brainard (D); Davis (N.S)

ADDRESSES

AT THE

FIFTH ANNUAL SESSION

OF THE

American Dental Association

BY

W. W. ALLPORT, D. D. S. ;
DANIEL BRAINARD, M. D. ;
N. S. DAVIS, M. D.,

AT

Chicago, July 25th, 26th and 27th, 1865.

CHICAGO :

JOHN C. W. BAILEY, PRINTER, 164 CLARK STREET.

1865.

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AS MADE

AT THE ANNUAL MEETING

OF THE

American Dental Association

AT THE CITY OF CHICAGO

ON THE TWENTY-SECOND DAY OF SEPTEMBER

IN THE YEAR 1900

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DR. ALLPORT S
ADDRESS OF WELCOME,
DELIVERED AT THE OPENING OF
THE FIFTH ANNUAL SESSION
OF THE
AMERICAN DENTAL ASSOCIATION,
AT
CHICAGO, JULY 25, 1865.

MR. PRESIDENT,
And Gentlemen of the American Dental Association:

In bidding you welcome to the city of Chicago, on an occasion so interesting and auspicious to our profession as the present, it may not be deemed inappropriate to the time and place of our meeting, to indulge in a brief retrospect of the past.

In the summer of 1859, twenty members of the Dental Profession met in convention at Niagara Falls, to consult together as to the expediency of forming a National Association upon the representative basis. All, I believe, who were present felt that if such an association could be formed, and it should receive the sanction and co-operation of any considerable portion of the better class of practitioners, the best interests of the Profession would be promoted, and great good result to the public.

The number of state or local societies, then existing, to send delegates to the annual meetings of an association of this kind, was so very limited, that but few even of the small number present felt at all sanguine of the ultimate success of such an enterprise. But in view of the many great and good results anticipated from such association, in case it should be crowned with success, and in the hope that the formation of local societies would be stimulated thereby, it was determined to take the initiatory steps for the organization, deferring final action until the following year.

At the appointed time, July 31st, 1860, *twenty-three* delegates only, of the various Dental societies and colleges then existing, met in the city of Washington, and the American Dental Association was organized, and entered upon its work. Five years only have passed, and from what was a small and doubtful beginning, by the steady and well-directed efforts of those who were instrumental in its formation, this association has become one of the most successful enterprises of the Profession, and one of the most useful and influential Dental societies in the world.

Of the professional standing of those who have attended, as delegates, the annual meetings of this Association, and have been accustomed to take part in its proceedings, it is not necessary for me to speak. They are universally acknowledged as standing among the most scientific and successful operators of our time and country, and as belonging to the class *progressive*. The Essays and Discussions of the members of this Society have passed into the literature of our Profession and become a part of its history. In point of ability, they have been by far the ablest and most instructive that have ever emanated from any body of dentists in our country, and will suffer little, if any, in comparison with the essays and discussions of the American Medical Association. Should this Association adjourn *sine die* to-day, and never hold another meeting, yet sufficient good has already been ac-

complished by it to fully vindicate the wisdom and foresight of those who first projected it, and have done the most to sustain it.

As we cast our mind's eye over the history of Dentistry, and see how, in the last forty years, it has risen, from a tinkering, catch-penny calling, to the dignity of a noble profession, in whose ranks may be found men of high moral and scientific culture, commanding alike the confidence and respect of the educated and refined, we can but attribute much of this progress and pleasing result to the influence of our various local and national associations. All of these associations have their influence for good, and are important, but none is so well calculated, in every respect, to allay that spirit of jealousy and distrust in each other, none so well calculated to strengthen the bond of a common interest and brotherhood, that should bind the Profession of the East with the West, the North with that of the South, and make all to feel their mutual dependence upon each other, as a representative National Association. In it are embodied the principles that underlie the structure of our national government, which has demonstrated to the world, that for the protection of a community of interests, or for the development of resources, whether material or *mental*, no organization or government is so strong as that based upon the principles of a representative Republic.

You are all familiar with the advantages of association and combined labor in the various avocations of life, no matter whether it be mental or physical labors. You assemble here to-day, as delegates and members from different parts of our extended land, and in the discussions here elicited you will find new illustrations of the old familiar truths that "knowledge is power," "union is strength," and "in a multitude of counselors there is wisdom." By the contact of mind with mind both will be strengthened, and embryo ideas and theories will be developed into full maturity. "There is a magnetism in such contact, full of creative energy. Flint and

steel are passive in themselves, but clash them together and they give out fire, and brightness dazzles upon the sight. The positive and negative poles of a battery never come together without a *result*. By friction of different mental organizations together, an idea is evolved, a new law is discovered, a new creation is added to the wealth of knowledge, and the long-coming rays of new truth, like those of a far-off star in the laboratory of heaven, reach and illumine the world."

Gentlemen, this Society was organized for a purpose. Its mission is not yet fulfilled. It has a great work yet to do—a destiny to accomplish. The men who were instrumental in its formation were not discouraged because it was so small and unpromising at first. They knew that in the Profession it had a strong and vigorous mother to nurse it, and that its growth was certain, but they did not expect it to mature so rapidly. Nor will those who are now engaged in it be so elated by its unexpected success as to allow it to sink under that supine and careless indifference, which so often follows prosperity. Its course will be onward and upward—its motto, Union and Progress.

As the scourge of war passes away from our country, and peace "with healing in her wings returns to bind up a nation's wounds," and those who have hitherto stood arrayed against each other in deadly conflict shall engage in the various pursuits of industrial activity; as that portion of our country which has been laid waste by the desolating hand of war shall be rebuilt, and the millions, North and South, in trust and harmony, shall once more labor to develop the untold treasure of our broad domain, we may look forward to a period of unexampled prosperity in the history of our country.

The rich cotton plantations and rice fields of the South, with the broad prairies and fertile valleys of the North, shall yield an abundant reward to the freeman's hand; the slave pen and human auction block shall give place to the church

and the school-house: with human slavery, the source of all our troubles, forever extinguished from our land, honest pay shall be awarded for honest toil, and we may look for a season of prosperity such as the country has never known.

Wealth, education and refinement will become more general; and our Profession will be called upon to administer to the wants of a higher civilization. As specialists in medicine, to ameliorate suffering and contribute to these wants should be our aim.

To be the better prepared to do this we should divest ourselves of all selfishness and vanity of opinion; and with uncovered heads drink of the fountain of knowledge, from whatsoever source it may flow. We should measure ourselves with ourselves, not to show that one man is stronger than his fellow, or to pull down those who have been more successful than ourselves, but to give just confidence to the timid, and to strengthen and raise up the weak. None should be ashamed to learn, or afraid to teach. Freely to give and freely to receive should be our object.

Some of you, before reaching home, will have traveled thousands of miles to attend this meeting. It may be you have come burdened with the rich treasures of experience and skill, to lay them upon the common altar of your Profession, for other's good; or, it may be you have come to drink from the fountain of thought which others have prepared for you. Here as ever, he who would freely receive should freely give. And here, too, the "widow's mite" is as acceptable as the rich man's treasure. Whether you have come to give or receive, gentlemen, as Chairman of the Committee of Arrangements of the American Dental Association, I bid you welcome to the Garden City of the Lakes—to the Commercial Metropolis of the North-West.

Many of you visit to-day, perhaps for the first time, the city of Chicago. As you walk our streets, and see our magnificent and well-filled stores, our palatial residences, our

splendid churches, our model schools and colleges, our grain elevators and warehouses—the largest in the world—our shipping and railroad interests, branching out in every direction, our magnificent Chamber of Commerce, with its massive and solid proportions, and this artistic and imposing opera building, in which we meet; as you look around and see here the largest grain depot on the continent, a city stretching out for miles in every direction, with a population of two hundred thousand souls, it may not be amiss for me to state that it is not yet thirty years since Chicago was known only as a military post, with a few Indian traders, who were supplied with the comforts of life from the East.

The very spot on which we are assembled to-day, in this splendid temple devoted to the fine arts, in the centre of this great commercial emporium, thirty years ago was but a hunting ground, covered with prairie grass, through which the Indian pursued his game.

And yet last year, our city sent forward to the seacoast and to European markets, nearly fifty million bushels of grain, enough, if placed in freight cars, to make a train extending almost to the city of Philadelphia. The growth of only a quarter of a century has made Chicago the largest original grain market in the world, not excepting Odessa, the famous grain market on the Black Sea.

From whence comes this prosperity—this rapid growth? It may all be told in one word, and in it is taught us an important lesson—*Enterprise—Enterprise!*

To Chicago, then, as the Metropolis of Illinois, and to Illinois, the leading State of the great North-West, I again bid you welcome. The soil on which you stand to-day is too new to boast of ancient or classic memories, yet it is rich in the most sacred and patriotic associations. It is the home of statesmen, heroes and patriots, that have stood forth nobly in defence of the institutions founded by our fathers, and whose fame has gone forth over the whole world.

In the suburbs of our city, on the shore of Lake Michigan,

you will stand by the grave of the gifted and patriotic Douglas, whose eloquence once thrilled our halls of legislation, and who, dying just as the greatest rebellion the world has ever known, was bursting upon the nation, left as an inheritance to his children, and to his countrymen a legacy, which so long as time shall last, shall stand out brightly on the page of history, the immortal words, "Tell them to obey the laws and support the constitution of their country."

And here, too, in his quiet Illinois home, engaged in the duties of civil life, was found the great soldier and military leader, whose genius and heroism, after carrying the armies of the Republic through the bloody battles and victories of Donelson, Shiloh, Vicksburg, Chattanooga, Spotsylvania and Richmond, finally won for us an honorable and lasting peace, and made the name of Grant immortal as is the history of his country, and of whom it may be said, as of one of England's great leaders, "he never fought a battle that he did not win, and never encamped before a city that he did not take."

And finally, in this city, five years ago last month, in a building erected for the purpose, and which is still standing, was placed in nomination for the Presidency, Illinois' honest and cherished son, whose sagacity and statesmanship guided our country safely through the perils of a gigantic rebellion, and whose untimely death left a nation in tears. Millions yet unborn will tread these streets, as they wend their way over the Western prairies, on their pilgrimage to the grave of Liberty's noblest martyr, ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

To our State, gentlemen, I again bid you welcome. Welcome to your duties—welcome to your pleasures—welcome to Chicago.

SPECIALTIES AND SPECIALISTS IN MEDICINE.

BY DANIEL BRAINARD, M. D.,

Professor of Surgery in Rush Medical College, Chicago.

DELIVERED BEFORE THE

AMERICAN DENTAL ASSOCIATION, IN CHICAGO,

July 26th, 1865.

Gentlemen of the American Dental Association :

It gives me great pleasure to meet here the members of so honorable and useful a profession as yours. The profession of Dentistry is one of very modern origin, and is that branch of the medical profession which owes its development and perfection most essentially to our own country, and is indeed, I think I may say, the one branch of the profession in which we Americans can claim especially the pre-eminence. To be an American dentist is a recommendation in all the principal cities of Europe, and although the medical profession in general, and the surgical department especially, has an honorable position in the literature and among the profession in foreign countries, it can hardly be said to have a claim to the title of any pre-eminence.

I have said that your profession was of comparatively recent origin. It is almost, I think, within the memory of many persons here present when it was regarded as a merely mechanical operation, little better than the higher branches of mechanical employment. Step by step it has developed itself to a degree that, in perfection, in usefulness, it does not

in my opinion, rank second to any of the single branches of medical or surgical science, [applause]; so that at the present day, to be without a dentist would be to be without one of the essentials of civilized life. [Renewed applause.]

Now, in speaking of its having a mechanical origin, I do not intend anything disrespectful to it. My own especial branch of the profession is surgery, and, I might say, a part of surgery; and it is not very long since surgeons, as a class, occupied a position far less honorable and important than that occupied by dentists at the present day. In the middle ages in Europe, so called, or rather in the latter part of the middle ages, from the fourteenth to the end of the fifteenth century, or thereabouts, surgical operations were performed by barbers. There was no distinction between those that performed a surgical operation and those that cut hair, and curled hair, and powdered hair. The duty of the surgeon was considered to be to perform an operation when he was directed, and as he was directed by a physician, and, when he had performed the operation, to retire and leave the case to the physician. And it happened, after a certain period of time, that these operators acquired a certain amount of knowledge beyond the immediate needs of operating, and were called upon to advise about operations, and about the treatment of cases after operations. And this was considered a great innovation upon the profession. It was considered something outrageous and disgraceful to the profession; and the man who should have consented to meet a surgeon in consultation would have been expelled from the faculty for consulting with a quack. I have in my library a work published by the President of the Faculty of Medicine, in Paris, entitled "*The Brigandage of Surgeons*," setting forth that they were asserting claims which, if allowed, would be the destruction and disgrace of the medical profession.

This comparison I bring forward for the purpose of sustaining the assertion that I make, that the difficulties under which the dental profession labors are nothing new. By speaking of

the difficulties under which you labor, I mean this : the difficulty and length of time which it has taken for the honorable, and educated, and competent men of that profession, to assert and maintain full equality in professional standing with members of the medical profession who practice other branches of it. That difficulty has existed in regard to every particular branch of the profession that has at any time been embraced by any particular class of men, and is not peculiar to the dental profession. It results from that deep seated prejudice, for I can call it by no other name, that has existed from the earliest times and is inherent apparently in the nature of every profession and that is to resist innovations or changes in regard to the doctrines or the practices of that profession. This peculiar aversion to changes results from the nature of professional education, and is one of those things that is treated of by Lord Bacon in his *Novum Organum*, under the name of "Idols of a Class," or those things which prevent members of a particular class from seeing the truth in regard to their own profession. It is, and has been, one of the great obstacles to the progress of the medical profession. It is an obstacle which at the present day is partially, but only partially, overcome. It is the thing which has prevented a large number of men of genius and industry in the profession from embracing and following out the study and practice of a particular class of diseases, in such a way as to have perfected our knowledge of the nature and treatment of such diseases.

Now, the principle that I wish particularly to assert here is this, that the medical profession, in order to be most useful, in order to acquire its due influence over the community, in order to perfect its knowledge of the nature and treatment of diseases, must adopt a special course of study ; each individual member embracing that course which he judges on the whole to be best adapted to his faculties, and leaving out to a certain extent others for which he has no qualifications. I advocate special studies and special practice ; and, although

the words have been somewhat discredited, I advocate "specialties" and "specialists."

Now, I undertake to say that the very great opposition which this doctrine has met in the profession, is not founded upon reason or justified by the experience of the profession. It is an opposition which is working to the disadvantage of the profession as well as the public, and to the manifest disadvantage of a very great number of the individual members of the profession; and therefore I wish to insist a little upon the point.

What are the natural divisions of the science and practice of medicine? Is there no natural division? I hardly think that any one would be so bold as to assert that there are, and ought to be, no natural divisions. For a long time, when the science of medicine was in a very rude and imperfect state, the members of that profession did study and practice all its branches; and in the older works on Surgery, Pharmacy and Chemistry were as much treated of as the operations of surgery. Still, even at that time, there was the commencement of division, and the first was into Pharmacy, Surgery and Obstetrics. The next division which came was into Medicine and Surgery, Surgery being, as I have stated, the mechanical application in the manner already indicated. At a later period, there commenced to be apparent the distinction between the Obstetrical department of the profession, and the separation between Pharmacy and Medicine was accomplished entirely. By degrees the distinction between obstetricians and medical practitioners came to be recognized in particular localities, in large cities especially, to a very considerable extent; so that medicine, towards the middle of the last century, might be said to be divided into Pharmacy, Medical Practice properly so called, Surgery, and Obstetrical Practice; whilst yet it remained true in regard to the greater portion of the civilized world—the country in general, in America as well as in Europe—that the larger number of practitioners continued to practice all its branches, to collect and

prepare their own medicines, to practice Pharmacy, Surgery, and Obstetrics. And at the present day, this is the case with a very large part of the profession throughout the civilized world.

Now, it is manifest—all experience and reason show—that men who practice medicine in this way practice it only in a rude and imperfect manner; that they neither understand Pharmacy, nor Medicine, nor Obstetrics; that, from the nature of things, they are incapable of acquiring skill in any one of those branches; that it is absolutely necessary, in order that there should be any progress in regard to the science or practice of medicine, that some of these should be excluded, and others proceeded with especially, by each individual member of the profession.

Let us examine the question for a moment. The Dentists, as a body, have, according to my own knowledge and observation, perfected the mechanical means of performing operations beyond what has been done in any other branch of the profession. They are better mechanics than the Surgeons, and their instruments for accomplishing the different objects which they have in view are more numerous and better suited to their purpose than are the instruments of surgeons. Now this is essential to the proper performance of dental operations. And how this has happened? It has been simply that there have been dentists, as a class, who have devoted their attention to that purpose; and we as surgeons never could have invented or perfected these instruments, and consequently could never have perfected dentistry. And that division of labor is a thing which, at the present day, is manifestly necessary, and which no one now disputes.

In regard to surgical instruments, there are two departments in which they have been singularly perfected. The one is in regard to those instruments which are used for crushing urinary calculi, which are the most admirably adapted to their purpose. How did that come about?—Three men of genius at the same time happened to

devote their whole attention to that thing—the crushing of stone—and they especially perfected those instruments. And without that perfection of these instruments, the crushing of urinary calculi must have remained forever, as it had up to that time, a mere phantom floating in the mind without any practical application whatever. Therefore it was necessary in this particular that there should be special studies. The other branch in which I consider the mechanical means to be wonderfully perfected, is that regarding instruments for operations upon the eye. These instruments have been brought to such a degree of perfection, of delicacy and accuracy, that they are capable of accomplishing things almost inconceivable, and accomplishing them regularly, constantly, and without difficulty or danger. Now, how has this happened? It has happened in the same way; there have been a class of men who have devoted their attention to that subject exclusively, have thought of nothing else, have worked at nothing else but the perfection of means for the accomplishment of that which they saw before them to be done. But when you come to other things that have not been made specialties, the condition of our science is singularly rude and imperfect. There is nothing in our science at the present day which has the slightest claim to be respectable apparatus for the treatment of fractures. Particular individuals, by the attention which they have paid to it, and by an excess of superior mechanical talent or ingenuity, have been able to accomplish with the instruments which they use a considerable degree of success, but there is no instrument for any given fracture that can be mentioned, that can be taken by a person of ordinary good education of the profession and put upon the member in such a manner as to accomplish any perfect result. The greater number of the instruments which are used in the profession for fractures of the leg and called “fracture boxes,” are not anything better than dry goods boxes, [applause.] and simply serve to accomplish the result of concealing from the surgeon the position in which a

limb may happen to lie. [Renewed applause.] What is the reason of that? The reason is, that there never has been as yet any instance that a man devoted himself to fractures as a speciality, and nothing else, and this is the one branch in which a specialty is most needed. They are the species of accident which are the most frequent, and which disable a man more than any other, and entail untold miseries upon him if unskillfully treated; but the instruments for the accomplishment of this purpose never will be reduced to any great perfection, until it shall be known that the devoting of time and talents to one subject leads to honor and not to being partially thrown out of the profession. [Applause.]

If I should be unfortunate enough to meet with a fracture of the jaw, the first thing I should do would be not to send for a surgeon at all. I should send for a dentist. [Cheers.] They have directed their attention to the mechanical means and apparatus necessary for holding the jaws in their place, to such an extent, that they are better qualified to make them than surgeons are as a general thing, and, perhaps I might say, more than any surgeons are.

I might go on and point out to you that with regard to no one thing about them are the instruments used by surgeons, the best adapted to their purpose.

We are disputing, at the present day, all over the world what kind of sutures are the best to use. A great many of our instruments for the purpose ligating arteries and performing similar operations, are singularly rude and imperfect, and their imperfection is only remedied by the skillful use of the fingers of the surgeons.

How is this to be remedied? It is to be remedied, gentlemen, by special study; by the profession changing its views upon that subject, and saying to the young men, when they are entering the profession and when they are about to leave the schools, that it is better for them to devote themselves to some particular branch of the profession and try to understand it. I often have young men from various parts

of this country, who are here to visit the west for the purpose of locating themselves in their practice. They very frequently come to Chicago, and we are always glad to see them. We are very proud of our city, and if you want to get into the good graces of any Chicago man or woman, you have nothing else to do but to tell them it is a nice place. [Laughter.] But these young men come here and they say: "What kind of a place is Chicago for a professional man?" Now that is a very hard question to answer, because politeness does not permit me to ask another question. I could say to the young man, that if you know any one thing better than the generality of the profession, it is a good place for you; but if you do not, it will be a bad place for you. And for those young men who are incapable of applying their knowledge in such a way as to earn their daily bread, incapable of using their knowledge for the benefit of any particular class of men, so as to make it desirable for them to call upon them, Chicago is not the place. That is the difficulty under which members of the profession labor when they would enter into practice.

How is this to be remedied? It is to be remedied, in the first place, by acting upon public opinion. The profession which listens with leaden ears to the propositions which come from members of it to change the time honored usages to which it is subjected, is sensitively alive to intimations which come from the people who employ them. Public opinion in this country is law, and in order that the laws be made good, public opinion must be enlightened. Individuals are powerless, but ideas are irresistible; and the way to remedy it is to take the idea or fact that in order to make the profession useful and powerful, it must be developed and perfected in all its branches, constituting each one of these branches one body, each part of which co-operates in its proper sphere and most useful manner in advancing the interests of the whole profession. [Cheers.]

Now, in saying that I am in favor of special studies and

practice, in that way, I do not commit myself to anything; and the profession won't regard this as anything but a "glittering generality." Therefore, I state that I think there ought to be Dentists to attend to the teeth, Oculists to attend to the eye, Aurists to attend to the Ear, and special Physicians to attend to diseases of the heart and lungs and make the physical examinations which are so difficult, and a special class who will be able to use the microscope for special examinations, that there should be not only practitioners of obstetrics, but those especially devoted to different branches, I mean that the incapable obstetrical practitioners never should be allowed to use instruments; that there should be men qualified for that. And then in regard to surgery, that it should in addition have a number of branches. That in these there should be one branch devoted especially to the treatment of fractures. That there should be another branch devoted to the treatment of tumors, without absolutely circumscribing these departments by definite lines at the present time. When that is done, then the profession will cease to occupy the principal part of the time in its meetings or associations with quarreling with quacks. The man who is thoroughly accomplished in any particular department of his profession, is very little troubled by quacks. [Applause.] Then the public will come to know the usefulness of the profession.

The dental profession, at the present time, is not consulted in one case in a hundred, or one in a thousand of those which require the care of a dentist. That is because the medical profession is not educated to the proper standard, and does not tell these people as they ought to do, that in cases of difficulties about the teeth, they should apply to a good dentist.

The same is true in regard to Surgery. There are operations enough that ought to be performed, in every populous county in the State of Illinois, and which are not performed, to give employment to all the surgeons in those counties. They do not know that there is any man who applies himself to that particular kind of disease, and when they look around

for information they look to that particular kind of advertisements in the newspapers ; and you know what kind of information they get there. [Laughter.] I repeat, then, that the way of progress in the medical profession is in the way of special studies.

How is this to be brought about? I would not have you to suppose, by any means, that there should be a special school for every department of medicine and surgery. On the contrary, I would very much prefer that there should be no divisions whatever. And if I might be permitted to express an opinion upon a subject which may be delicate, it would be an opinion with regard to the dental profession, that they had better not be separated from the medical profession. I think it would be better for them to receive their education in the same schools and to the same extent as other members of the profession. And I think that in order to effect their education there ought to be and will be, perhaps not in my day, but there will be professorships of diseases of the teeth in every respectable medical school in Christendom. [Cheers.] What is taught at the present time in most medical schools in regard to teeth, is the order and time of dentition ; and then, in case the child is sick during that period, that the gums are to be lanced. [Laughter.] In some schools there is a little advance upon that. But there is no medical school, so far as I have any knowledge, where the diseases of the teeth and the causes which produce them, the means of obviating them, the irregularities of the teeth and the means of correcting them ; the best thing to do in case of any particular appearances of the teeth ; I am not aware that in any institution, even to that extent, it is properly taught.

Of course there must be colleges of dental surgery, so long as dental surgery cannot be learned elsewhere. This is a want, and until we can supply it the practice of surgery must be necessarily more or less imperfect. It is necessary, in my opinion, that the dentist should be an educated physician. [Cheers.] It is necessary that he should understand the

structure of the body beyond the teeth. [Cheers.] And I will mention this curious thing about anatomy and quackery. Anatomy in itself would not seem to teach a man much of a practical nature; but I have never yet seen an accomplished anatomist who was a quack, or a quack who was an anatomist. There is an incompatibility between the pursuit of that sublime science, which makes the two incompatible; and if you will fetch before me any man, whether he be a dentist or otherwise, and he will tell me all that is known in reference to anatomy, I will accept that man as a scientific man, without asking him another question. [Laughter and applause.] That is the foundation of all medical science, and therefore you must have that; and you must have, in addition to that, the knowledge of physiology. You must have an especial knowledge of the action of medicines, as they operate upon the human system, not to speak of those other branches of science and accomplishments, outside the profession strictly so called, which are so necessary to give influence to science, to render man happy, to adorn his life, and make him a gentleman. I would have, in the first place, all the different classes of the medical profession educated in the same schools, to the extent of acquiring this general knowledge of which I have just spoken; and then I would have in each college not only a professor of diseases of the teeth, but I would have a special professor with regard to a certain number of other branches, at present of the diseases of the eye and ear, and of the nature and treatment of deformities of every kind. These branches have all acquired a degree of development which requires them to be treated from separate chairs; and when the student had got sufficiently accomplished in general principles, I would have him adopt that branch which he proposes to follow, and devote his special attention to it; and I would have these new chairs instituted from time to time as the wants of the community seem to require.

Medical science, which two hundred years ago was imper-

fect, has at the present time acquired a degree of development which renders it impossible that any one should master it in all its details. No intelligent man devoting his time to it can read all the works connected with it that appear in the English, German and French languages, from one end of the year to the other. It is a physical impossibility. It is a physical labor that he could not endure. How then is he to become acquainted with the details of all the different branches, able to perform every kind of operation, able to prescribe for every kind of disease? In proportion as the science advances, it will become still more extended, and difficult. As each science is perfected, this is the rule. There will be further advances which at the present day it will be unwise, if not impracticable, to define.

I have said that the profession, organized in the manner in which I propose, should be formed of parts not in conflict with each other, but should constitute one harmonious whole. The dentists are capable of exercising a great influence upon society. They are a numerous, enlightened, and I am happy to say, wealthy and influential body of men, and we, with all our prejudices, cannot afford to leave them separate and standing off. [Laughter.] The physicians and surgeons are capable of exercising a great influence in favor of the dentists, and they would, if better informed and more enlightened, exercise a greater influence than they do, by directing their patients always to apply to them for advice with reference to every question which might arise as to the teeth. This would be an advantage to the dental profession, and they would get it to a much greater extent if they were a recognized part of the medical profession, as they deserve to be. So with all the other different specialties; and whenever I see a man taking up one of these specialties, and for years together undertaking the labor connected with it, I say, "Go ahead, do what you can in that branch of the profession." I do not regard him as in any degree conflicting with my own or any other branch of the profession; I am happy

to see it, and I carry my approval to the extent of recognizing the principle in branches of the profession of which I might have, myself, some little doubt.—Such branches as the application of electricity to diseases, about which our information is so imperfect and indefinite. I consider that the application of electricity, by an intelligent man, would probably be of great use, and therefore when a man undertakes that specialty, I think he enters upon a useful work, and one that it is necessary to make a specialty of before it can be relied upon by the profession generally. It is the same with regard to another class of practitioners—the movement-cure men. That term—"Swedish movement cure"—is an unfortunate name. The method of treatment to which it is applied, did not originate in Sweden, but is founded upon the principles of physiology, justified by experience, incapable of being applied by practitioners who have not the necessary knowledge, and promising, in the future, as it shall be developed, the relief of a large class of diseases which have been, heretofore, and which are, at the present time, to a great extent, beyond the reach of surgical treatment.

These, gentlemen, are the essential outlines of the ideas which I wished to present to you. "A word to the wise is sufficient," and therefore I need not dwell upon them. It has given me great pleasure to know that this convention was a successful convention, and that it was attended by a large number of men from various and distant parts of the country. You have already received a welcome from your own profession here: that welcome was only the expression of the feelings of the general community with regard to yourselves and every other body which comes here for purposes so useful and honorable as yours, and therefore, from the harmony of your session, I have only to hope that it may be useful, interesting and improving, and if you ever need a place to meet in on another occasion, I would take the opportunity of asking you, on behalf of the medical profession and our citizens, to come back to Chicago. [Loud cheers.]

REMARKS OF N. S. DAVIS, M.D.,
President of the American Medical Association,
AT AN ENTERTAINMENT GIVEN BY HIM, AT HIS RESIDENCE,
TO THE
MEMBERS OF THE
AMERICAN DENTAL ASSOCIATION,
IN RESPONSE TO THE FOLLOWING TOAST,
OFFERED BY
DR. C. W. SPAULDING,
PRESIDENT OF THE ASSOCIATION,
JULY 27, 1865.

"To the President of the American Medical Association; Medicine, Surgery, and Dentistry—departments of a common science, their disciples should constitute a common brotherhood."

Gentlemen and Ladies:—I am not only happy to be honored with your company this evening, but cheerfully respond to the sentiment just expressed by your honored President. That medicine, surgery, and dentistry are actually practical departments of a common science, very few will be disposed to deny. I say *common science*, in deference to popular custom. It would be more proper, however, to use the plural form of expression; for what is generally styled *medical science* is really an aggregation of many sciences, and their cultivation with direct reference to the prevention and alleviation of human suffering. The science of medicine, popularly so called, consists of facts and principles selected from every department of natural science, philosophy, psychology, political and social

economy, and their application to the elucidation of the causes, nature, and treatment of such diseases, deformities, and injuries as are liable to afflict our race. Hence the student of medicine, in its general sense, is emphatically a student of nature. And not only so, but he studies the broad fields of nature for the highest and noblest of temporal objects, namely, to qualify himself for mitigating or relieving the imperfections, deformities, and diseases of his fellow men; whether they occur in the teeth, the organs of special sense, the extremities, or the more vital organs within the body.

Medicine, surgery, and dentistry are all based upon anatomy, physiology, pathology, and materia medica. Without anatomy none of you, as dentists, can know either the structure of a single tooth or its connections with the jaw, gums, bloodvessels, nerves, &c. Without physiology, none of you could know the natural uses and influences of the several parts just named, or the relations of the teeth to the whole processes of digestion, assimilation, and nutrition. As pathology bears the same relation to organized structures in an imperfect or diseased condition, as physiology does to them in the natural, so without a knowledge of it, neither the physician, surgeon, or dentist could know anything of the origin, nature, and tendencies of the diseases and defects he professes to treat. The materia medica, in its full scope, includes everything that can be made useful in the mitigation or removal of any of the ills to which man is liable. The gold that fills a cavity in a tooth, the wash that soothes an irritated gum, and the instruments used for adjusting both, are as much a part of the armamenta or materia medica, as are the pills and powders administered by the physician. These four branches of medical study are fundamental, and no man can do full justice, practically, to the most limited specialty without a thorough knowledge of them all.

Every member of your Association will acknowledge that a dentist should certainly understand the composition, structure, and mode of development of the teeth, together with the causes that render their development defective, or induce in them dis-

ease and decay. But in a single tooth you have three out of the five primary forms of living, structural organization, namely, the fibrous, vascular, and nervous, with the peculiar arrangement of inorganic matter to give it solidity.

A knowledge of these structures, whether chemically, anatomically, or microscopically, involves a knowledge of the same structures in all other parts of the body. To understand the development of a tooth and its appendages, from materials selected from the blood, involves a knowledge of the blood itself, and all the laws that govern the intricate processes of assimilation, nutrition, and disintegration in living structures generally. The same remark applies with equal emphasis to the causes of imperfections and diseases of the dental organs, and the means for remedying them. Indeed, there is not a living atom of our physical organization so isolated that a knowledge of its structure, nutrition, disintegration, and various morbid conditions, can be obtained, without developing all the essential facts and principles of anatomy, physiology, and pathology.

So far, therefore, as dentistry is a science, as distinguished from a mere mechanical art, it rests on the same foundation, and necessarily involves the same series of studies as all other departments of medicine and surgery.

Of late, much has been said about specialties and specialists; and there is, at this day, especially in our country, a manifest tendency to favor the multiplication of both. We are told that instead of a few leading divisions of medicine and surgery, we should have almost as many specialties as there are important organs in the human body; and that every individual member of the profession should devote himself to the study and treatment of some one class of diseases, or the diseases of some one organ or apparatus of organs. By thus concentrating attention upon a limited number of diseases or injuries, it is claimed that greater skill will be acquired in their treatment; and more advancement in our knowledge of their nature and tendencies. Division of labor and concentration of attention, is said to have

been the parent of most of the discoveries and improvements of modern times. It is further claimed that the whole field of medical and surgical sciences, with their practical application, is so extensive that it is impossible for one man to so master the whole, as to properly qualify himself for the practice of all its departments.

This process of reasoning is plausible, and to a limited extent true. It is true that in all the mere mechanical arts, the greater the division of labor, and the more perfectly each man is restricted to a certain series of movements, the greater will be the skill and accuracy acquired in their performance.

The Dentist who restricts his work entirely to the processes of filling teeth, may possibly acquire greater skill in that particular work, (provided he has enough of it to do,) than he would if he filled teeth, extracted teeth, fitted artificial teeth, &c.

The Surgeon who restricts himself entirely to the more important and delicate operations on the eye, or the ear, or the bloodvessels, may acquire greater dexterity in those particular operations, than if he attended to the whole field of operative surgery. But the rule applies properly, only to such operative procedures as are essentially mechanical; and cannot be extended to the treatment of diseases of particular organs, without causing more mischief than good. The reasons are obvious to every enlightened and reflecting mind.

First, the various organs of the human body are not so many isolated parts, the functions and diseases of which have no influence upon each other, but they are so intimately connected and mutually dependent, that not a single morbid impression can be made on one organ that will not exert a modifying influence on all the rest.

The same heart sends the blood to every organ and structure in the body. The same nervous centres radiate the delicate threads that are to impart sensibility or command motion to the remotest parts of our organization. And the same vital properties pervade every living atom. Every link in the chain

of various constituting digestion, assimilation, nutrition, disintegration, and excretion is so connected that not one can be broken or marred without embarrassing the action of the whole. Hence, it is literally impossible to comprehend the nature, tendencies, and results of the diseases of one organ without studying their influence on all the others and *vice versa*. Hence there can be no such thing as specialism proper, in the study of pathology or the nature of diseases. The whole field must be studied before any one of its parts can be fully understood.

Second, the circumstances of civilized communities ever have, and probably ever will, prevent any extensive division of practical medicine and surgery into specialties, except in a few large cities and densely populated towns. Much the larger part of the inhabitants of every country occupy the rural districts, where they are obliged to send from one to ten or fifteen miles for a practitioner of any kind. Now, suppose each member of the profession was devoting himself to such special diseases as he imagined to be most in consonance with his taste, and a farmer living five miles from his market place or business centre, should be attacked with acute pain in his side, and send for Dr. A. on the supposition that his attack was inflammation of the lungs. After ten or twelve hours delay, Dr. A. arrives, but finds on examination that the pain is certainly located below the diaphragm, and of course no disease of the lungs. Inasmuch as the diseases of the lungs and throat constitute his specialty, the case does not belong to him and he retires. From six to ten hours more are spent in getting Dr. B., whose specialty embraces the diseases of the abdominal viscera or digestive organs. But, on examination of the case, Dr. B. finds the acute pain in the side of his patient to be neuralgic and dependent on the disease of the spinal cord or its membranes, at the origin of the nerves affected. This places the case out of the range of Dr. B.'s practice, and makes it necessary to send ten miles to a neighboring town for Dr. C., whose specialty embraces diseases of the cerebro-spinal nervous system.

Again, suppose the farmer, instead of having been attacked

with a pain in his side, had fallen from a load of hay and broken his leg, and wounded an artery in his hand.

A messenger is sent in great haste to the nearest town for Surgeon A., who comes, perhaps, with a new and improved fracture box, and dresses the broken leg with much skill and dexterity. This done, he asks for his fee, and takes his hat to depart. Hold, Doctor, exclaims the patient; you have dressed my leg, but are you going to leave me to bleed to death from this wound in my hand? Oh, my dear sir; blandly replies the Surgeon, that is not in my department. I attend only to fractures or injuries of the bones. For injuries and diseases of the bloodvessels, you must send for Surgeon B., in the adjoining town. Without multiplying illustrations, is it not obvious that specialties can be made practically beneficial only in populous towns; and even in them only to a limited degree? It may be said that the cases cited as illustrations are of the nature of *emergencies*, which every professional man must be prepared to treat, at least temporarily. But how is he to be prepared to treat such cases, even for the briefest practicable period, without having so studied the whole field of professional science and practice, as to be familiar with all its parts? If he has so studied it, what becomes of the argument or pretense that the field is so extensive that one man cannot keep himself master of the whole? The truth is, that the greater part of medical and surgical practice consists of emergencies. It is not one time in ten, that the physician or surgeon, when he starts to visit a patient for the first time, knows what kind of disease or injury he will find on his arrival. And he can neither satisfy an enlightened conscience nor do justice to a confiding community, unless he is always prepared to meet such emergencies, and treat whatever ills may be presented to him in a skillful and proper manner.

If a man, living in the country, is attacked with iritis or acute conjunctivo-cornitis, and suffers a permanent disorganization of the textures of the eye and loss of vision before he can possibly reach a reliable oculist, it is a very unsatisfactory

apology for his family physician to allege that diseases of the eye constitute a *specialty* to which he has given little or no attention. Yet many such cases are constantly occurring throughout the country.

But, gentlemen, there is still another aspect of this subject worthy of a moment's thought. From the very nature of the laws that govern mental operations, exclusive practical attention to any one department of a general subject, tends to contract and bias the mind, by giving undue relative importance to one series of facts, while neglecting another series of equal real value. An evil of much greater magnitude, however, consists in the strong tendency of specialism to encourage incompleteness of professional education. During a connection with medical teaching for sixteen years, I have rarely found a student who on his final examination, proved himself ignorant of some important department, without alleging that he did not intend to practice that particular department, and consequently had paid less attention to it. Indeed, incompleteness of education leading to the adoption of partial and restricted views, and the universal tendency to neglect whatever is not intended to be turned directly to practical pecuniary advantage, constitutes the foundation of much of the evils that exist in the profession of our country.

You are, doubtless, ready to ask by this time, if I then oppose all specialties in medicine. By no means. There is a certain natural basis on which a limited number of specialties can be founded with great advantage; and which, indeed, develop themselves by the natural and inevitable course of circumstances. For instance, the diseases, deformities, and defects of the dental organs, involving no immediate danger to life, and requiring for the treatment of many of them, special mechanical manipulations, naturally, and almost necessarily, constitute a special department of surgery. A department, indeed, that should be regarded as equal in importance and dignity, and consequently requiring equal education with every other branch of the profession. Those conditions of the eye requiring delicate

and dexterous operations are also most of them chronic, and allow the patient time to seek and obtain the services of men who have acquired more than ordinary skill in the performance of such operations. The same is true of those conditions requiring some of the most dangerous and difficult surgical operations upon other parts of the body; such as lithotomy, ovariectomy, tying large and deep-seated arteries for aneurism, &c. Hence it is eminently proper that in all large cities where the required opportunities are afforded, men should devote special attention to such departments. But this never can justify any class of medical men for contenting themselves with only a partial professional education.

Mr. President, with the last clause of the sentiment you have offered, I most cordially agree. That all educated and honorable physicians, surgeons, and dentists should constitute a "*common brotherhood*," is dictated alike by a community of interest, a similarity of education, and a common object, namely, the alleviation of human suffering and the prolongation of human life.

I am glad to see the prosperity of your Association and its truly national character. Like the American Medical Association, it constitutes a strong social, as well as professional link to bind all parts of our country indissolubly together. And permit me to add, that if the members of the legal and ecclesiastical professions, from the East, West, North, and South, would annually commingle with the same cordiality and liberal feeling, it would so perfectly bind the hearts of this great nation that *secession* would never again drench our loved land in man blood.

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